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96-48

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

May 3, 1996

The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
The Federal Communication Commission
1910 M Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We urge you and the members of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service to act swiftly and decisively to fully implement *Section 254: Universal Service* of the Telecommunications Act, particularly *Subsection (h):*

Telecommunications Services for Certain Providers. These provisions are intended to guarantee affordable telecommunications rates to our nation's schools, libraries, and rural health care facilities, thus ensuring that they are able to reap the benefits of the National Information Infrastructure.

We are clearly witnessing a revolution in the way we do business and the way we live, a telecommunications and information revolution as important to our future as the industrial revolution was in the last century. It is imperative that schools, libraries, and rural health facilities be able to participate fully in the benefits of an Information Age. Telecommunications technology can help us provide a world class education to school children across America. It can ensure that all citizens, through their community libraries, have access to the same rich information sources. And telemedicine can help us provide all Americans, regardless of where they live, access to affordable, quality health care. Section 254 (h) was drafted to make sure this happens.

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The Honorable Reed Hundt

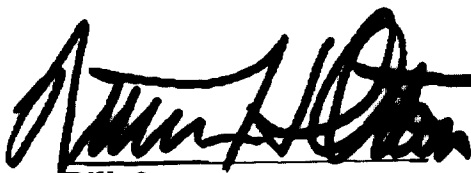

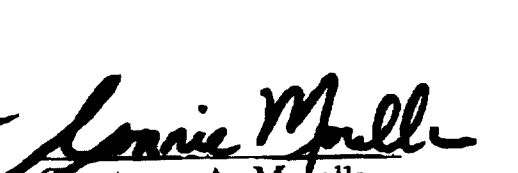
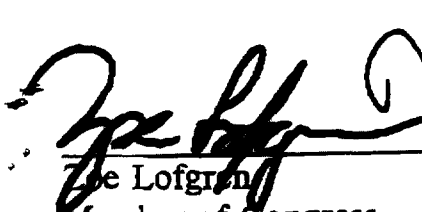
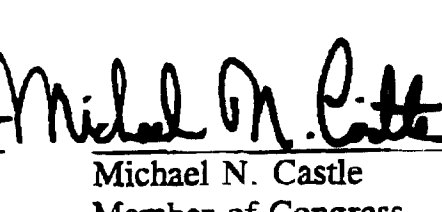
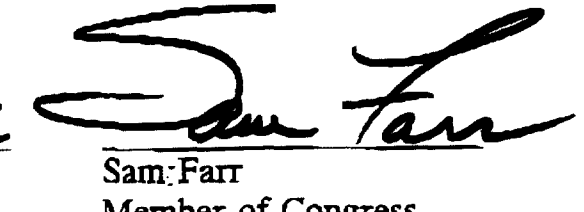
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Implementation of Section 254 (h) will require creative efforts, and consistent oversight, to ensure that the provisions and the discounts meet the needs of schools, libraries, and rural health facilities. Congress fully intended to ensure all schools and libraries have affordable access to telecommunications services so that a nation of telecommunications "haves" and "have nots" does not develop. Thus Congress specified that discounts should be directed to individual schools and libraries rather than to states. To fulfill the intent of the law, every school and library submitting a bona fide request should receive the discount necessary to ensure affordable access to the educational telecommunications services. It is also essential for definitions of special services and advanced services to be modified as technology changes and develops.

We thank you for your attention to our views, and look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

| | | |
|--|--|---|
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|  Zoe Lofgren Member of Congress |  Michael N. Castle Member of Congress |  Sam Farr Member of Congress |

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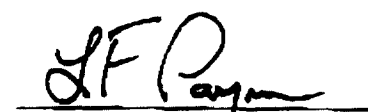
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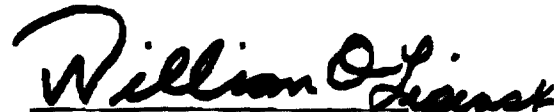
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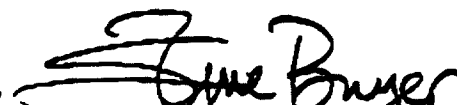

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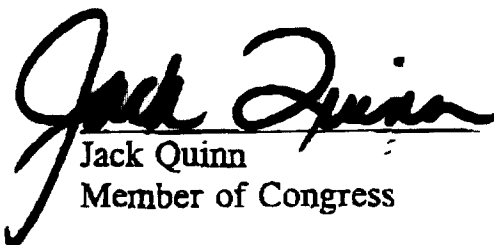

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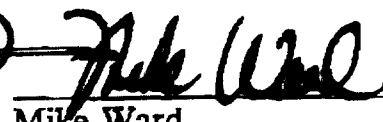

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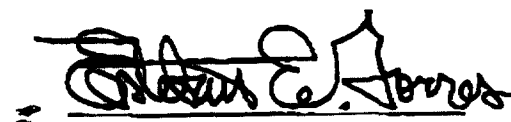

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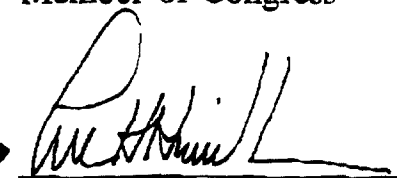

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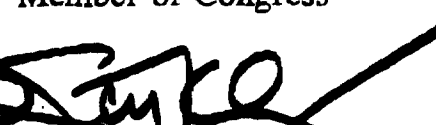

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